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ECONOMIC AND ENVIRONMENTAL QUESTIONS: REPORTS OF SUBSIDIARY BODIES, CONFERENCES AND RELATED QUESTIONS: FOOD AND AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT

Cooperation in fisheries in Africa

Note by the Secretary-General

The Secretary-General has the honour to transmit to the Economic and Social Council, pursuant to Council decision 1994/264 of 25 July 1995, the report of the Director-General of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) on cooperation in fisheries in Africa (see annex).

* E/1995/100.

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Annex

REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR-GENERAL OF THE FOOD AND AGRICULTURE ORGANIZATION OF THE UNITED NATIONS ON THE ACTIVITIES OF THE MINISTERIAL COUNCIL ON FISHERIES COOPERATION AMONG AFRICAN STATES BORDERING THE ATLANTIC OCEAN

1. This report has been prepared by the Director-General of FAO, in consultation with the Chairman of the Ministerial Conference on Fisheries Cooperation among African States Bordering the Atlantic Ocean, in pursuance of Council decision 1994/264 entitled "Cooperation in fisheries in Africa".

2. In that decision, the Council took note of the report of the Director-General of FAO concerning the activities of the Ministerial Conference on Fisheries Cooperation among African States Bordering the Atlantic Ocean (E/1994/79, annex). The Council decided to include in the agenda of its 1995 substantive session the question of cooperation in fisheries in Africa.

3. The Third Session of the Ministerial Conference on Fisheries Cooperation among African States Bordering the Atlantic Ocean, which was to have taken place in Praia, Cape Verde in November 1994, has now been scheduled for 10-14 July 1995. This statement therefore covers activities undertaken by the Ministerial Conference since the 1994 substantive session of the Council.

Status of the Regional Convention

4. In accordance with article 22 of the Regional Convention on Fisheries Cooperation among African States Bordering the Atlantic Ocean, the Convention was open for signature by African States bordering the Atlantic Ocean referred to in its article 1, in Dakar, Senegal and at FAO until 31 December 1992. After this date, in accordance with its article 23, the State which did not sign the Convention may accede to it by depositing an instrument of accession to the Convention with the Director-General of FAO. Article 24 provides that the Convention shall enter into force thirty days following the deposit with the Director-General of FAO of the Seventh Instrument of ratification, acceptance, approval or accession.

5. As at 19 May 1995, the Convention has been signed by Cameroon, Cape Verde, the Gambia, Guinea, Mauritania, Morocco, Senegal, Togo and Zaire. Guinea and Senegal have ratified the Convention, while Côte d'Ivoire, Equatorial Guinea, Gabon and Sierra Leone have acceded to it.

6. In response to Council resolution 1991/73 and a request from the Chairman of the Ministerial Conference that FAO provide interim support particularly in the form of a project pending the establishment of a Permanent Secretariat, the Director-General of FAO approved the project TCP/RAF/2253, which became operational in May 1992. A major activity of the Project was the organization of a Legal and Institutional Workshop in Praia, Cape Verde, in July 1993, which examined issues relating to different options for the establishment of the Permanent Secretariat. The report of the Workshop would be presented to the

Third Session of the Conference of Ministers for decision. The project was operationally closed on 30 September 1994.

7. A regional fisheries law advisory project designed to provide advice to the Ministerial Conference, subregional bodies and individual countries of the region was formulated by FAO and endorsed by the Second Meeting of the Follow-up Committee. The project, GCP/RAF/302/EEC "Improvement of the Legal Framework for Fisheries Cooperation, Management and Development of Coastal States of West Africa", has been operational since May 1994 and is based at Dakar, Senegal. It is financed by the European Union and executed by FAO. It is also supported by two bilateral donors (Canada and France) through the financing of two associate professional officers. The project has published regional compendia of fisheries legislation and has begun studies on surveillance and enforcement, tonnage of fishing vessels and territorial fisheries rights. It has organized a regional seminar on the harmonization of fisheries legislation for the countries of the Sub-Regional Fisheries Commission for Northwest Africa and has scheduled a regional consultation on the observer system for late 1995. At the national level, advice on fisheries legislation has been provided to Angola, Côte d'Ivoire, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau and Cape Verde. National seminars have been organized in Angola and Guinea. Requests for assistance have been received from Gabon, Namibia, Sao Tome and Principe and Senegal. The project has an internship programme which allows lawyers from participating countries to receive on-the-job training. Activities of the project have been conducted to the satisfaction of participating countries and FAO.